



# COUNTY OF SAN DIEGO NEWS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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## **MORE DEAD BIRDS FOUND WITH WEST NILE VIRUS** ***American Crow Found With Virus in San Diego***

San Diego County Vector Control officials announced today that a dead American Crow was found north of Torrey Pines in the City of San Diego on July 30<sup>th</sup> and tested positive for West Nile virus, bringing San Diego County's West Nile virus count to eight dead birds and one horse.

"As we see the virus spreading throughout San Diego County we want to remind residents to check their homes for mosquito breeding sources such as plant saucers, dripping irrigation pipes and old tires. Anything that can hold standing water for up to one week can breed hundreds of mosquitoes," said Gary Erbeck, Director of the San Diego County Department of Environmental Health.

The County's West Nile virus Web site, [www.SDFightTheBite.com](http://www.SDFightTheBite.com), has a mosquito prevention checklist. This checklist includes a list of everything that can become a mosquito-breeding source in backyards, from birdbaths to wheelbarrows. Residents are asked to check their property weekly to ensure that water is not collecting in their yards. Larger water sources such as horse troughs, decorative fountains, ponds and inoperable swimming pools can be stocked with mosquito eating fish to control the mosquito larvae. These fish are available free of charge at 11 locations around the county. The addresses are listed on the Web site.

Vector Control continues to pick up and test crows, ravens, jays, hawks, owls, and falcons to monitor the spread of the virus. The public is encouraged to report dead birds if they meet the following criteria: they have been dead for less than 24 hours; do not have a foul odor; are not covered with ants or flies; are not stiff; and if their bodies are intact and have not been hit by a car, shot, or killed by animals. Placing a bag of ice over the bird will help to preserve it until Vector Control staff can collect the specimen for testing. While you cannot get West Nile virus from dead birds, officials advise wearing disposable gloves if you must handle bird.

You can protect yourself from the virus by: staying inside at dawn and dusk; wearing long sleeves and pants when outdoors; and by using an insect repellent containing DEET when outdoors. Keep screens on doors and windows, and make sure they are in good repair.

For more information on West Nile virus, or to report mosquito breeding sites or dead birds please call the County of San Diego Vector Control at (888) 551-INFO (4636).

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